

HEART *to* HEART
LETTERS



MARGARET BOTTOME



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HEART TO HEART
LETTERS

Heart *to* Heart Letters

*BEING EXTRACTS FROM THE
LETTERS OF MARGARET
BOTTOME TO A SON*



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PREFACE

WHILE I was at school and college, I received many letters from my mother, written in round hand, and such letters as any mother would write to any son. In 1875 I went to England to live, and from that date became the recipient of weekly letters. In course of time, her handwriting so strikingly altered as to reveal a new personality. A few sentences will explain the marvellous change, which came to her life, after she was well past forty.

I was for many years her only son. I was born when she was in her early twenties. She made me her companion, when I was only eight years old. I worshiped her. We sang together. She prayed out loud, before me. She took me to all the Church Services, in the Methodist churches, of which my father was the pastor. In those years she was a shy, reserved woman, terribly in earnest about her religion, but without peace. She tried to believe in God, as her Church believed in Him, in those days. I knew she held communion with invisible things. I could not guess what she saw, but I knew it was a vision beyond my ken. Now I know.

*Her self from God she could not free,
She builded better than she knew.*

It cost something to be a Methodist in those days, and she paid a top price. She was told it was her duty to speak in class meeting and to

lead the singing, and I held her hand in class meeting, and I can hear the Leader say, "Sister Margaret, tell us what the Lord has done for your soul." She would spring up and, her face flushed with the effort, just softly reply, "The Lord is very gracious unto His servant." Never more than this in those far-off days. How blind I was. But not so dull as to mistake a knowledge of a force, which used to make my hand tingle as I held her hand in mine. She was passing through a furnace of affliction. She took up the cross of a minister's wife, and tasted that peculiar vintage, which only those know, who experienced the narrowness and bigotry of the religious life of the fifties and sixties. All the time she was beating out the music of her woman's heart; and at long last, she quietly emerged from years of meditation and disillusion, of misunderstanding and prejudice, and entered into an experience, which was to be as a fountain of living waters for the women of her age. She outpoured to me in her letters to England the drama of her widening life and influence. The women who had patronized her, in former years, now followed her lead. She had arrived!

Year by year, she wrote to me, as she wrote to no one else, for we had our confidences, and she knew that I knew, and so she wrote as the spirit gave her utterance. But though I was too engrossed with a new life, fully to appreciate them then, I kept them all, and now I know, that what was passing be-

fore me as it had done all my life, was the making of a soul, for the revelation of God to her own generation. There are multitudes of women, who will agree to this, that they never heard her speak, in public or in private, without feeling a thrill of a strange vital force pass from her into their own hearts. For when she used voice or pen, it was *a woman who knew*, who wrote or spoke! Now if I was the only judge, I should hesitate to publish extracts from these letters, just because I am her son. But one of the greatest critics of English Letters and biography, Ernest Hartley Coleridge, gave me his opinion of them. I can see him now, as he said with the force of absolute conviction, "You have a treasure here the world must share."

For some years, I have kept my treasure-trove close. But now that my brothers have shared my joy, in reading and editing them, it would be selfish in me to refuse to share them, not only with those who knew and loved her personally, but with that wide circle of men and women who knew her through her writings. I agree with my brothers' view, that only extracts should be given, and that matters personal to me and to my family should not be published. And even now I print but few of them; and amongst these one or two written to my oldest daughter. Few as they are, they speak for themselves. They ring true. They touch one with the pressure which sets the lights aflame in the room, and reveals the hidden things.

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Who writes letters now? Such letters? Do you know anyone who sits down and writes long, intimate, stirring letters, to people whom they have never met, but who have begged for a letter, as they would for a cup of cold water when athirst. This was her labour of love for many years. Now the hand, often so tired, writes no more. The tender loving voice is not heard. Yet she still speaks; I would fain believe that; speaks from lips who heard her message, and translated it into their own speech and action. Here as I write these words, revisiting the city which she knew from slums to palaces, as I feel the electric atmosphere of this nerve-destroying civilization, see the faces which vibrate to the swift erratic pulse of the times, I say to myself, let me at least bring back the memory of one who seeing it as we see it now, saw also, more clearly and with abiding joy, the things which make for peace. I see the high buildings, the swift moving of the population, here and there; I see the wealth, and pride, and organization, and material strength, but these things, great as they are, were not the source of this nation's greatness. Those springs rose in Walden Pond and the House of Seven Gables, in Emerson's home, in the shades of peace where Whittier and Longfellow and their little brotherhood lived, wrought, suffered and triumphed; in the little parsonages up and down the land, where the Puritan tradition held sway.

I wish to share with my brothers this privi-

lege, of bringing to a wider circle, some of these rare and vital thoughts from her letters. These Personalities whose hands wrought at our tasks, whose hearts agonized and triumphed in the very problems we try to solve, come to us, in their writings, with a rare comradeship. They are like deep silent wells, unthought of in the busy fields, where men gather the harvest; awaiting the hour, when they come in to slake their thirst, and let down the bucket, for those cooling waters which never fail to inspire and console. They bid us be brave and press forward, treading where they trod, upheld by the same sustaining grace.

To no self-satisfied, and self-centered person will one word in these letters appeal. But if anyone in the struggle, in the dead set of the tide of a lower life asks, "How did they win through," here are some words from one who had sounded the depths, and found anchorage in the Father's Will, the Son's Love, the Spirit's quickening Power.

William McDonald Bottome.

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IT is as mild as spring, and the sky is so beautifully blue. No, I do not think it easy to live on both sides of the Atlantic, but I do believe that those who are separated by the wide sea, may live above land and sea, and be like eagles: *mount up with wings as eagles!* O how quietly they fly above the earth, and on earthly things look down! The Son of Man, which is in Heaven, He lived here, and yet He was in Heaven. O, there are heights and depths we have not yet attained unto! I seem these days to be growing down; I am like the roots stretching underground for water. It becomes more and more clear to me that our one need is God. Those old lines of Charles Wesley are more than ever to me,

Give me Thyself, from every boast,
 From every wish set free;—
 Let all I am in Thee be lost,
 But give Thyself to me!

FOR so many years I "stuck to it" that the trouble was with the inside machinery, if we were not happy. I have said to your father more times than I can count, "No, if we are not happy under these circumstances, we would not be happy under other circumstances. It is the self, the selfish self that makes the trouble." *Self is the irksome weight.*

'Tis we, not they, who are at fault
When others seem so wrong.

All this I am surer of to-day than ever: our one need is God. We need the truth that lies behind the words: Thou in me, and I in Thee; a fullness of love. We are made for love; it is the only thing worth living for; and outside of the perfect love of God, we shall starve.

WE are here on this earth to do the will of God. It isn't to have a Church, unless that is the will of God. It isn't this or that or anything else, but to *do* the will of God. I have a feeling that you are passing through unusual trials. Now turn from the outward to the inward. As I look back, I can see how closely I held myself to the condition of my own heart in the sight of God, and of course everything was small compared with that. What I am in His sight, is a business. Experimental religion is the one thing needful; God is the one necessity. What a lovely day this has been! rainy outside, but so beautiful within. I cannot finish my letter: my hand gives out.

IT is often true that those we call worldly people, show far more of what has been called the "milk of human kindness" than those from whom we might naturally expect it. There should be more discrimination in this matter of gifts, and the Bible rules are unheeded by those who talk most of the Bible. We are to give to those who cannot requite us; and then there is such danger of our withholding the little things, because they are so little, when love would make them valuable. St. Augustine said, love is your weight. As the years go on, this whole matter of what we call religion (or better, Christianity) is so simplified in my mind and Wesley was right, Christian perfection should be sought: *let us go on unto perfection.*

MY "word" for the Talk I give to-morrow is *acquaint thyself with Him and be at peace; thereby good shall come to thee.* Only one acquaintance can insure us perfect peace, perpetual good, and how few seem to be interested to become acquainted with Him? Time is used for everybody, for everything, except the cultivation of acquaintance with God; and yet this is life eternal, to know Him! In my childhood, I knew a very old and very illiterate man, who hardly ever said but one thing, *O do get acquainted with God! O do get acquainted with God!* And the echo of those words has never left me. How well I remember the house we lived in then; it had an old-fashioned garret, and by a small window, on a bit of carpet, I had my chair. And on a little table were my Bible, and Thomas a Kempis' Imitation of Christ. And there I used to spend hours, getting "better acquainted" with God!

I AM so impressed at this time with the "weight" of *ourselves*; rather than of what we have done. I know *I* must be a success before God, and that is no little thing. It is no little thing to be true; true to what you know is true. Beecher once said that all the steps upward did not count, if the last step was not taken. Someone said, "I don't see that, Mr. Beecher." "Well," said he, "if you jump and just miss it, *what becomes of the jump?*" Wasn't that like Beecher? Now I am thinking of God's scales: they are unerring: *what you are*; and if we are wanting in ourselves, it is an eternal want. If we have Christ, we do not *want*; and He only can meet that deep want.

THE word "amusement" seems to me to be used so much more than it used to be, as if it were the end of life. And the word "vacation" is to me a modern word. I cannot get accustomed to it. All the vacations I had for forty years, as a wife and mother, were in going to Camp Meeting for about ten days each year, and if I had ten dollars to spend, I was rich. When I reached the Camp I worked hard, from morning till night, and heard no such words as "amusement" and "vacation."

WE start for home to-morrow; and I go back on my way to health, I trust. The rheumatism is not worth speaking about. I walk as straight as anybody but I take no romantic walks, you may be sure. I am commanded to do what Walt Whitman advised: *loaf and invite my soul*. An old minister I met the other day said: "If you have rheumatism, don't pet it: there is nothing it likes so much as to have attention paid to it." I shall be too busy on our return to pay it much attention: we have got to get to house-keeping.

THERE are times when I feel I cannot go to funerals. Very few funerals seem to be Christian or human; I should like one or the other! How dreadfully mixed things are. I shall be so glad when that which is in part shall be done away; and that which is perfect shall have come. But my faith triumphs. I read to-day that Mr. Moody, when a young minister in Chicago, was invited to attend a funeral. So he took his New Testament to see what Jesus did at funerals, and he found that every funeral He attended, He broke up! Life broke up death!

YOU see I am not away from home now, and really if my feet were not painful, I should be just the same as ever, "flying about." I have been thinking this morning of those words, *He will keep the feet of His Saints*. I asked George about it yesterday; but he replied, "the emphasis is on the *Saints*." "Well," I said, "I was thinking of that too," and then I saw the laughter in his eyes. However I think I understand it better now. Feet stand for service. Where have my feet loved to go? To church, to prayer meeting, to camp meetings. Now why may I not think He will keep the interests, which the service of my feet indicated? There is a ministry in pain, as well as a mystery of pain.

I AM thankful for my hand this morning, because it means to me that I can still hold a pen. Once these hands held you, undressed you; but that is, how many years ago? The Doctor said to me the other day, "I wish I could put you back fifty years." I wondered he did not think of me fifty years hence! O! I should like to see myself fifty years from now. What a pity we do not live more in the future! Everybody talks of houses; going to have them "fixed up;" going to move into something better; but so few seem to be anticipating the Father's House. Think how beautiful it must be. Let us live in Him more definitely now; then we shall live with Him hereafter in His House!

HEART TO HEART LETTERS

GOD has given you what not "one in a thousand" have; facilities for education, hearts that love you; those who trust in you and hope in you, as well as for you. I know you have much to struggle against. I know the inspired penman says, man is fearfully and wonderfully made, but it does seem to me that some natures are more fearfully and wonderfully made than others, and yet it is these very natures that can be so wonderful for humanity, if they only overcome. O, what a word that is, and yet only those who overcome are crowned, and crowned here! Crowns are made here and worn here, if they are worn anywhere. So buckle on the armor; fight the good fight of faith; faith in God; His help, His Presence in you. Not outside you merely, but work out the God in you. Every noble impulse, every desire to be grand, to be good, is God in you.

THIS is the anniversary of my marriage. Fifty-three years ago today I was married, and I am here at Ocean Grove, and I might as well be here as at any other place. I have no one that I can talk to, about that beautiful September afternoon. If I hadn't a beautiful faith, I would be sad, but my faith "shuts out." I believe my dear ones are on a fairer shore than this, and that I am on the way to meet them; and while the storm is sweeping this coast, I am saying, "no storm can reach my inmost calm." There is a wedding day ahead, which is indeed *the* wedding day; and all other wedding days are only a figure of that true wedding.

I SAID in an address I made this afternoon, that Christ's picture of humanity was true. A few words tell it, but they are tremendous: *Robbed! Wounded! Stripped! Left half dead!*—that is a picture of humanity. Now upon this scene comes Christ to "take care" of this wounded, stripped, half dead humanity; bringing with Him oil, wine, bandages, and binding up. He said He was sent to *bind* up but somehow we do not expect Him to do it. Then He said when He gave the man over to his fellow men, 'take care of him.' He does take care of us. What a picture is His parable of His own divine compassion!

WE are face to face with great problems here. The Church (sad as it sounds) does not meet the need; and that need is salvation from sin. You have prayers you repeat, but who expects the prayer *Vouchsafe to keep us this day without sin* to be answered? I shall never forget hearing a Methodist minister say, forty years ago, that the masterpiece of Satan is in getting professing Christians to disbelieve that they *can* be saved from sin! When St. Paul said so long ago *therefore being free from sin, ye have fruit unto righteousness*, he meant it. But something must come to us before we believe it. We shall have to have another Pentecost. There is an absence of belief in the power of the Holy Ghost.

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I AM on "old Long Island's sea girt shore." The spiritual life is so much more to me than any other life, that I shall have the experience of what came to me last night, long after everything else is forgotten. The truth was so real to me in the night, when the moan of the ocean was in my ears (for I am right on the ocean here): "like the sea which cannot rest." And it was so plain to me; no matter what one has, or what one has not, without having God, we cannot rest. Rest in the Lord! You cannot rest in circumstances. You cannot rest in any creature. If you do, you are liable to be disturbed. There is an ideal life which I am sure we may have, of seeing God in everything. Whittier saw God when he saw the white caps, that are so beautiful this afternoon, and he called them the white-winged messengers, hastening to prayers, and he added:

They kneel upon the sloping sand
As bends the human knee,
A beautiful and tireless band,
The priesthood of the sea.

One feels like saying:

Waves of God's boundless sea of love,
O come and wash my shore!

AS I listen to the critics on every side, I say, Yes! I cannot touch you, but there is a sea which perhaps you may never have reached: the sea of the inner spiritual life, one that is not dependent on mere scholarship or intellectual thought; it is the child life of the spirit. Mind you, I do not say that neither men of science nor scholars have this life, but it is a life that is guided by the laws of grace. I am glad these days that I was brought up a Methodist and in the doctrines of Methodism: the witness of the Spirit, the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins, the being filled with love. There is enough of the Bible left for me, after all which the critics take. Christ said, have faith in God. It is God I want to know, and no man, by understanding, can find out God. It is the pure in heart who see Him; it is with the heart that man believeth unto righteousness!

THIS little roof garden where I write, seems a fitting figure of my life at this time. On the top of everything, the flowers are in bloom. I seem to have everything: I abound! The shadows here flee away, very largely. I don't want to give you the idea that all that I have today, I have as a reward of merit! Far from it. As an old friend said when he came to die, I cannot stand on my past record! I can say that too; but still over all, and under all, is the mercy of God, the tenderness, the loving kindness, the forgiving love! "O how merciful, how pitiful, the Lord has been to me." I do love that old hymn:

God of my life, whose gracious power
Through varied deaths my soul has led,
And turned aside the fatal hour,
And lifted up my sinking head!

All I can do is to bless His holy Name!

I THOUGHT I would not write my Christmas Letter on the dark-edged paper; the white and gold seems so much more appropriate.

They are all robed in spotless white
And conquering palms they bear!

The past and future have so blended at this Christmas time, that I have gone through the present as if there was no present, or as if the past and future were present with me. Of course I am reaping what I have sown. I think one gets accustomed to looking at the things which are not seen, through the mere *habit* of looking at them. Today *he* has what we cannot even imagine; he is the rich one today!

I MUST get Pilgrim's Progress and read again about Pilgrim coming in sight of the Delectable Mountains, because I think I must be there. I am constantly looking forward. I am really acting out what has been an ideal with me. I have seen so many gloomy Christians, and I have said to myself, Why, I should think, if God has given their loved ones Paradise, and they are on their way to join them, they would want to make this world as bright as possible for those who have to stay here. And this is more real now to me than ever. For months before your Father went, I lived on this: *I am the Life*, and when the change came, that men call death, I had only to pass on to *and he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die*. There I stopped, and there I live!

DO you know this passage, *the mountains shall bring peace?* I have seen a sight this morning I shall never see again, when I leave these Alps, till I

Summer high in Heaven
Among the Hills of God.

I wakened long before daylight. I thought of Mt. Blanc as I saw him yesterday, in his whiteness that is never tarnished, always white, though the whiteness leaves his kindred hills, his smaller brethren. No change ever comes to Mt. Blanc! As I thought of it all, such a desire to be white and clean came to me, and to be kept clean, and with it such a sense of my sinfulness. And never in my life did I pray, more truly, as my heart uttered the words I had so often sung, *Wash me and make me thus thine own.* And then I thought of that perfect Atonement, and of the Blood that cleanseth. My head had been buried in the pillow, and I had not noticed that it had become day. Just then a little bird began to sing, and as I reached the window the sun was kissing the face of Mt. Blanc, and the chimes began to play and as I leaned my head on the window, and saw the sun touch one after another of those wonderful Alps, my heart said,

And I shall walk in soft white light,
With Kings and Priests abroad,
And I shall summer high in heaven,
Among the Hills of God.

O! OUR beautiful faith! Our dead die not. I know that *death* is not blessed; but blessed are the dead, and blessed are they who have their blessed dead. It is refreshing to see what I read a few moments ago: "Know of a truth that only the time shadows have perished or are perishable; that the real being of whatever is, and whatever was, and whatever will be, *is*, even now and forever. This should it (unhappily) seem new, thou mayest ponder at thy leisure for the next twenty years or the next twenty centuries. Believe it! Thou *must* understand, if thou *cans't* not." So said Carlyle.

MY friends have wondered that I could endure it, to let you go away from me. They do not know the springs of my life. *All my fresh springs are in Thee*, the Psalmist said, and so can I. I could not see you leave me, the son on whom I had expected to lean, and be to me what I had so longed for, if it were not for the truth behind the motto you once gave me: *the love of Christ constraineth me*. For His sake, I give you up. I have no language to express the unutterable longing I have, that you will do for Christ the work your Mother has so often longed to do. Make Him known to a dying world! No human learning, no human gifts will suffice. Nothing, nothing less than the baptism of Fire, will fit you for your work, and make yours a *burning ministry*!

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SOMEbody says the meanest record of thyself has worth. Your father came in a few moments ago with a basket full of letters, and among them some letters of mine, written thirty years ago. I smiled as I looked at this sentence written in a letter to your father: "If you look after Christ's interests, He will look after yours;" and only early this morning, I had the same thought. Those old letters breathe the air of devotion to Christ. I was then a little over twenty. How strange it seemed to handle those old letters; and to be introduced to my old self. A whole generation has passed since then. The letters did me good and will help me.

THIS is the eve of Thanksgiving. There are times when I feel about twenty, and there are times when I feel a little older; and the quiet of my room is very delightful to me, and anniversary days are days when, if I do not thereby lessen the enjoyment of others, I like to be alone. All the same, I assure you this is a day of devout Thanksgiving with me. I am thankful for all that God has given to your father. What it must be to have Paradise, I must wait a little while to know. To see *the* Face that makes Paradise; to see the faces of those one has so dearly loved, what must it be! I am thankful I have my Faith; I am thankful I have the Comforter; and I certainly have Him. So I am full of Thanksgiving at this anniversary time: but it is all the outcome of a Past; everything was leading up to this.

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I THINK there is such danger in depending upon God, and yet in some way (it may seem only a little thing) being disloyal to conscience. No matter how we pray, or trust in God, we shall be wrecked, if we are disloyal to the "man within" as the Indians call conscience. There is some reason why we do not come into the Harbour for which we were built. That Harbour is God, and never till we are in communion and fellowship with Him, are we fulfilling our destiny. He made us for Himself, and the soul has no home but the bosom of God; and to come into fellowship with Him, there must be a "clearing of ourselves." It is interesting to see how nature is studied, how to address nature, as they say. The wire is placed so that the lightning can reach it; the factories are built so as to have the advantage of the river; the one thing seems to be how to get in position, so that our little power can come into connection with a greater power.

I WRITE from the summit of Mt. Washington. This is one of the supreme hours of my life. No language can portray my emotions: very few are here with me (in spirit) in this awful solitude and on this wonderful height. The clouds are all beneath me, and I have just come down from the signal station, and the master had a peculiar fascination for me, as he stood by his instrument, measuring the wind. It is as cold now as in the depth of winter, and the wind is blowing a gale. How much this would be to you. I am on the heights at last; and I saw what few have seen this whole season; a gorgeous sunset. We were up so high that all the clouds were below us and formed a sea, (like "a sea of glass mingled with fire") and the grand mountains were under our feet; and peak by peak we could look down upon. Then after a few hours' sleep I saw the sun rise, and it rose on the ocean. The clouds were again as a beautiful sea; and at dawn I looked out and saw what was coming. The moon was shining, and the stars so near me. At seven we began the descent; and the trees near the summit were so pitiful to behold. The storms have done their work; finally they have become ghostly white; and the boughs all bend down instead of up; and some trees are torn up by the roots; and others have fallen into each other's arms as if in final despair. And all this is on the way to the heights! I cannot write more; it is too much for me.

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YES! it is true! Narrow is the way that leadeth unto life; but O, how magnificently broad Life is when you get to it. I don't believe it is possible to have what you want, what you cannot be satisfied without, unless there is a forsaking of all to have Him! No, we must settle one thing: do we want God? And He says, You shall find Me when you seek for Me with all your heart. All you desire is before you; and more than you dream of; but there is no other way to it than by an entire consecration of all. And that is merely clearing the track! Self must get out of the way to make room for God. And your life will be a failure, and you will be sensible that you are a failure, until this be done. What alone will satisfy this world is an intensely earnest man; devoted to one thing; and everything else only helping on that one thing.

SANTA Claus stays longer in some families than in others and I don't believe in hurrying his removal. But the time finally comes when the child says, "Now I know what you mean by Santa Claus," and often it looks as if most of our life was a kind of childhood; until at last we say to our Father, "I know what you mean," and we find out, as our children do, that Santa Claus means God. I have a belief these days in "Slowness." You cannot "hurry up" some things. *He that believeth shall not make haste*; such haste shows lack of Faith. One of the lessons of the Incarnation is the length of time that elapsed between the Promise and its Fulfillment. The Coming One! how long they waited for Him! And yet how impatient we are to see the fulfillment of our ideals. Yet they will all be realized, and it is such a mercy to have them.

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IN one sense your school days are over, and yet you will find life a school, and of course some hard lessons. But you will have companions in study, and ever and anon you will get prizes for your hard struggle to get your lessons perfectly. And whatever you may think of college honors, you must make up your mind at your entrance into this school of life, that only to those who *by patient continuance in well doing* seek for glory, honor and immortality, will the prize, Eternal Life, be given! And we do not do this fighting in an uncertain way, as they who beat the air. We know what we are about, we mean to have honor; the honor that cometh from God; we mean to conquer and graduate with the highest rank; and the music will be furnished from the skies, on *that* Graduation Day!

THERE is nothing at this time of my life that I feel more the need of cultivating, than "cheerful hope." Nothing seems more needed than hopefulness; a looking on the bright side, and it is much better for me to enter into your joy and be glad over what you have, even though I may not possess it also.

What matters, mine or another's day?
So the right word be said, and Life the sweeter
made!

I may not live to see some things, but they are coming. *God is Love* is my text these days!

I MUST tell you of a capital illustration which Harry gave me this morning. He wanted to know what the Revolutionary War meant, and I told him as simply as I could tell him. And he astonished me so, when in answer to his question, "Which won?" he gave such a cry of joy: Hurrah! and laughed immoderately, as if the victory had just been accomplished. He believed what I told him! O, I thought, if people would only believe in the work done on the Cross (our victory!); would only believe, as this little child believed in the victory of long ago; what joy would fill the Church!

THE older I grow, the more spirit becomes to me. Our Order of the King's Daughters is a spirit, and if that idea be lost, all that makes it of best consequence is gone. It means that whatsoever you do, do it *in His Name*. It is designed to bring up all of life onto this spiritual plane. And this is the reason for the absence of age-line, color-line, creed-line, social-lines; all here are merged into the love of Christ. In His Name! Keep emphasizing the *spirit* of the Order. God is the Father of all; and we are all His children.

DID you ever think of disappointment as a gift? We may not see all the blessedness of it till the Veil is lifted, and we shall know *why*. I believe that in every disappointment is wrapped up our highest glory, for *Christ in us* is the hope of glory, and but for disappointment many would never have come to Him. But for God's plough-share of pain and suffering that breaks us all to pieces, the seed might never grow. Do you remember Miss Waring's lines?

I will give thanks for suffering now,
For want, and toil, and loss,
For the death that sin made hard and slow
Upon my Saviour's Cross.

I SPENT a night at Newburg this week. I had often before crossed the Hudson in a boat, but until now no boat had had an upper deck. As I passed over the gang-plank, I saw near the stairs a notice in large letters: *Upper Deck*. So up I went, and there I found such a wonderful view of Storm King. The whole range of beautiful mountains, and all the glorious river were before me. I could look up and down, because I was on the upper deck. I took the lesson for my own, and said, "I will keep on the upper deck, that is the place for me; *I get the views there!*"

IT greatly impresses me to find that both the evil tongue and the good tongue are represented in the Bible by the strong figure of *fire*. The evil tongue is set on fire of hell. The good tongue is set on fire of heaven. This dispensation was ushered in under the symbol of a tongue of fire: *it sat on each of them*. "The three golden threads of domestic happiness, out of which it is woven are, to repress a harsh answer; to confess a fault; to stop (right or wrong) in arguing in self-defense." The tongue can kill in an instant. And there are deaths, where no burial succeeds. But if the tongue be a deadly poison: even it can be made life-giving; for it may be set on fire of heaven!

A T seventy, I am in close touch with young people. If you could be with me now; you would find a younger woman than when you saw me last. And I want you to be as young as I am now, when *you* are seventy. And of course you must begin at once; or continue, if you have begun. I think, looking back over my life, I have been "content with such things as I had," and this saves one from losing one's youth. Somehow I have always found a sunny side to everything; and I insisted on it with myself, that if I could not be happy under one set of circumstances, the trouble must be with the inside machinery. I had to get that in order, and I believe that had much to do with my youth today. If now you are in the least unhappy, say to yourself, the trouble is within: I will be happy: I will live in the sunshine!

I LOVE so to follow the history of that first Holy Week. Twice or thrice He went to Bethany. Phillips Brooks says: "You are marked in your character by the things you *can* do without; and the things you *cannot* do without." I cannot do without the marks in His hands and feet (He showed them!). I cannot do without Christ in His Death. My sins need the wounds, *His* wounds, though I have no theory of the atonement. No subject has ever perplexed me so much, and I am convinced that only the Spirit of Truth can make plain what the soul needs. The way it is often put has never taken hold upon me. All I know is, I cannot do without His Death.

The wounds of Jesus, for my sin,
Before the world's foundation slain,
Whose mercy shall unshaken stay
When heaven and earth are fled away!

I OFTEN see you as you were when a little child. Far off as you are now, of course I miss you; and yet I am glad I do not need to miss you in the deepest sense; for *you* are with me. I am glad you "idealize" your mother; and after all the ideal is the true. Few see us at our best. I am thankful we both have the power to idealize; it smooths many a rough place. I read in my girlhood a poem I have not seen for years; and so cannot quote it. It was an invocation, on the part of the poetess, to the spirit of poetry, not to leave her. If the spirit did depart, brooks would be only brooks, and stones only stones! Let the true spirit continue to move us both!

IT is very clear to me that to live apart from God is to be worldly. There is no safety in separating anything from God. Sorrow becomes worldly as well as joy, if it be not connected with God. And in the New Testament, the world is put as one of the three powers at enmity with God. As I have studied it, the fearfulness of this spirit of the world never seemed so dreadful. And it is everywhere like an atmosphere; as surely going to church as anywhere else; secreting itself as truly under a plain garb, as under a rich one. In the time of Christ, the worldly people were the Pharisees (the leading members of the Jewish Church) and He did not say to them, *search the Scriptures*; for that was their business; but, "ye search the Scriptures and you do not find *Me!*"

I FEEL the necessity these days of individual piety. I am a distinct individuality; I must give an account of myself to God. And then I must have my work for God; the work He has given me to do. There are so many different kinds of work; and it is a great comfort to know what to do. We never learn what we can do, save by working. It is not genius, it is not even great scholarship that "does it"; it is downright hard work. There is no one truth of the Bible more deeply burnt into my consciousness than this: *give and it shall be given unto you*. I get *in myself* by simply giving.

I HEARD a minister say once, that Christ in all His painful life only said, *Why*, once; and we need never have that to say: *Why hast Thou forsaken me?* We have begun our last year in this place. I intend (God helping me), this year, to think less of place, and more of Him, and to work for Him just where He places me, and do the thing He gives me to do. When we realize the truth of the words: *Thou, Lord, hast been our dwelling place in all generations*, we think less and less of other places. If my soul is only at home on the bosom of God, I shall be satisfied.

I SEE the necessity for believing strongly what you do believe. Weak believers make skeptics; the wonder is we have not made more. I tell you when people begin to think (not many do!) then look out! I am sure we cannot keep too close to the Sermon on the Mount. I am more and more persuaded that what we need is to live out that sermon; and to preach it. Perhaps if more who preach it, had lived it, not so many ministers would today be mourning the skepticism of their sons. Well, the battle wages, and we must stand to our posts; and above all we must have faith in God, practical everyday faith; the same when off our knees, as when on them!

I NEED not tell you how much I want to see you, and talk with you. After all, there is so much one can say that one cannot write; and you know I am at no loss in the way of talking! It seems my business these days. I think I know two things; human need, and Divine help. I think the great need of human hearts is a Comforter, and I know Christ is the Person we need. I think few know Him, as they need to know Him. I think many who preach Him, do not know Him. I have, in my work, a fact to build on and I am never at a loss! Human suffering is a fact, and there is so much suffering, where it is never suspected.

GOOD-BYE, my dear granddaughter! and be good; be brave; be self-denying. The One Perfect Example is ever before us. He was perfect! All through Europe I saw the Cross, and of course it always means, whether we see it or not, voluntary self-sacrifice. The Cross must be ours; we must bear the Cross; we must die on our cross to sin and suffering. There is no noble life but just here. Read the "Imitation." I loved Thomas a Kempis when I was your age. I want you to be a *grand* daughter; so much grander than I have ever been; only determine to be a saint; and everything will be arranged for you to become one.

HEART TO HEART LETTERS

ST. PAUL said to his Corinthian friends, *I determined with myself that I would not come again to you in heaviness; for, if I make you sorry, who is he that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me?* He put his WILL into this matter of cheerfulness; and what you *will*, you *are*. If there are Alps, then a *will* can make a way through them. There shall be no Alps! O! the power of an invincible will. All the difference between men is just here. One talent, with a will, will do what ten talents, without it, could never do. If St. Paul was downhearted, he would not cast the shadow on those from whom he needed cheerfulness. Who would make him glad, if he made them sorry? We cannot overrate this matter of cheerfulness; it is sunshine; and no man had more to contend against than had St. Paul. I too am determined that people shall not "catch" heaviness from me; "cheerfulness" is equally contagious!

EMERSON says, "Our tokens of love are for the most part barbarous, cold and lifeless, because they do not represent our life. The only gift is a portion of thyself. Therefore let the farmer give his corn; the miner, a gem; the sailor, coral and shells; the painter, a picture; and the poet, his poem." But this does not cover *all* the ground. Any gift that brings the giver with it, is full of love; so I cannot tell you how I felt when I saw your gift.

LIFE is too real and sad with me, for me to contend about much save the "faith once delivered to the saints." I think much less of what I am to say than of what I am to be. One thing I am decided upon: I will not talk about that which is not real and vital to me. Life is a terribly real thing to some people, and they are on a wild sea which will take a living Christ to "still" into a calm. And I have received my commission fresh from God;—I have heard the words, *Help those women*, and I expect to do it; for I shall take to them a Christ Who is helping me!

I N regard to talking of Him, and calling Him by name; there we see differently. It would be impossible for me to love a person, and not want to speak of him by name. And Christ to me is as human a being as you are; as certainly a man; and the joy of His religion is that He can adapt Himself to the need of a little child and help the child learn his lessons! And yet He is not only man, but God! I am afraid that not all who preach the Incarnation take it practically that God has been manifested in human flesh, and that a *Man* is on the throne of the universe. And yet if He were only my *King*; if the King had not, in His effort to get near us, called Himself by every endearing name that love could suggest; He could never meet my need; and that is just what He proposes to do: *supply all my need*.

I DO not think there is a person worth talking about continually, save our Lord Jesus Christ. If we acted what we sing about in hymns, we could not cease speaking about Him by name. What people want is to *see* Jesus: and when the love of Jesus fires the heart; out of the abundance of the heart will the mouth speak. What we need is the love of Jesus, so that we shall speak of Him as the early disciples did, though they went to prison for it. The Church of Jesus Christ today is taken up with about everything else but her risen Lord at her side. No, I will acknowledge all sorts of failure, but what I need is more of what you condemn, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire will make me declare: *I will know nothing among men but Him.* And what we know is what we talk about! Why was the symbol of this dispensation a *tongue*, if we were not to *talk* of Jesus, the Name high over all?

MY two little grandchildren who have just left me, after a little visit, are so ignorant, they scarcely know anything; yet they are as much George's sons as they will ever be! And now, in all our ignorance, and in our baby-world, we are still the children of God. But it doth not appear what we shall be. We are growing and are going on to grow more and more. I never understood so well as now the truth that faith is the *substance* of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. I have come through a furnace or am in one, and the fire has done its work. I know

He only designs

My dross to consume and my gold to refine.

But I tell you, I know what real gold is to-day; in distinction from that which is not gold. Where would I be to-day, this hour, if I had not a clear aim in my life? For notwithstanding all the imperfections, I have wanted to be useful, to be a joy or strength or comfort to others. And so did Frank, and now I am sure his work of usefulness is going on. I cannot imagine him as anything but busy, and as my work goes on, of course we are together. Our aim is one and that is a wonderful bond. I would not give the impression that there does not now and then sweep over me such a loneliness as I cannot describe, but it does not remain. For I get out and on to the unselfish side,

as quickly as possible and go to work comforting someone else. No selfish grief would be worthy of the Master, or him, or me. I must go right on and work till the day is done.

I DECLARE to you, there is nothing large enough for me but God, and God over all. I am truly glad when anyone finds rest to his soul in any communion. And it may be that some find it outside of any such communion. I have often thought of Tyndall's ascent of the Matterhorn. So many had tried it on the usual sides, and failed; but he tried a side which no one had till then attempted, and he reached the top! God is more willing to give Himself than we are to give good gifts unto our children, and is giving us all the time, without our asking. So we give to our children before they really know us, and are able to speak to us; and we never stop giving.

ONE danger with advanced thinkers is that in seeing "new" truth, they speak slightly of that which is imperfect. Now there came a time when the Law of Moses ceased, or was insufficient to meet man's requirements, and then Christ came. But He said *I am come not to destroy but to fulfill*. The Law was good so far as it went, but it did not reach the deepest need. *The Law made nothing perfect but the bringing in of a better hope did*. And yet the "old" and the "new" Scriptures are one. Perhaps there is a deeper meaning than we have yet seen in "despise not the day of small things." What I want is *reality* and it is so strange that what we deprecate in others, there we are apt to fail ourselves. That lesson of the Saviour teaches this: the man could not pay what *he* owed; and while, needing forgiveness himself, he turned on *his* debtor and *beat* him. So these days, I see not only my own faults, but God's forgiveness and I cannot turn on others so quickly and insist on my rights, as I have been accustomed to do!

ALL that we have called the "platitudes," have started into such realities lately. We have talked about the "uncertainty of life," until the words have no meaning. But they can become wonderfully real, through experience! And it will take a valiant soldier to walk the heavenly road. It is one thing to talk about a truth; and another to go through it, and we must go through. There is such a thing as fighting, and not getting through, not getting the victory; but to be able to get through here and now; to be able to say "thanks be to God, Who giveth us the victory," that is everything!

I READ in the papers that there is a great blizzard in Texas, and here also we are having what looks like a blizzard! All was peaceful when we went to bed last night; but now it is snow and sleet and ice and wind. The immediate question is, with a blizzard here, and one in Texas, is there any necessity why there should be a blizzard within? In addition to all my other comforts, I have a telephone and so can make "calls" on my friends. And I can pray, (that is my spiritual telephone), and if I hold the wire, I shall get an answer! So I can spend a pleasant, quiet, trustful day. I am glad of all the things I did yesterday! . . . Your letter on "stir-up" Sunday has just come. All my Sundays (and all my week days) are "stir-up" Sundays and "stir-up" week-days; but I like the name very much. Pentecost was indeed a "stir-up." What the Church wants is a "stir-up" experience!

HE is a greater God, a kinder God than my old theology gave me. I know, no matter what I have done, no matter what I am, no matter how unlike His ideal for me, no matter if everybody is discouraged with me, and I, utterly discouraged with myself, yet it is written, *he shall not fail or be discouraged till he have set judgment upon the earth.* And if He travailed in soul for me, then *he shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied!* In the twilight last evening, I read the close of *Habakuk*. I wish you would sometime look at the last three verses and mark the two words, "although," "yet," and then put in your lack, whether "outward," or "inward," and then follow the Prophet's example. God is left, no matter what is gone!

I HAVE found myself singing this morning the verse my mother repeated so often during these last two weeks of her life:

Happy if with my latest breath,
I may but gasp His name.

Oh! what a fountain of hymns was in her mind and how they have poured out at the last. I shall come from her death-bed, loving the faith, and the simplicity in which I was brought up, more than ever. "With charity for all, and malice towards none," but with a leaning towards the simplicity of our religion. And yet one comes to see how *one* real Christians are—after all the differences that divide them here, there is a unity in the spirit. "Holding the Head," we are very safe,

WHAT a grand opportunity is ours in merely living! If the curtain could only be lifted, and we could see how we are cheering those who were ready to give up in utter discouragement; how a letter came just in time; how a grasp of the hand warmed a frozen heart! All little things, yet anybody could do them. The hot tears start to my eyes and I think of those who ache at times for an inspiring, cheery voice! When I think of it all, the cry is forced from my heart: *Come, Lord Jesus, and come quickly.*

I THINK I told you of my little prayer for us all at the beginning of this New Year. I thought I would have only one prayer, and that so short, that I should not forget it. So in the early moments of the first day, I said: *Guide me!* and it seemed to embrace so much, that I offered it up for my children: *Guide them!* And now I must not fail to see His guiding Hand about you! You are in His Hand, and so are those very dear to you, and He will guide and keep. Never have I felt it so precious to trust Him as now. And I will trust Him to make you well. I think I never realized so truly, His power to heal. I ask for *His* interests, that He will restore you to health. He is leading and though there may be a dark tunnel, it means light ahead!

I HAVE written and said of late, that our religion was a costlier thing than we had thought it to be. And I have decided that holiness is the one thing needful, and holiness means "wholeness," soul-health, and I have no time for anything else. The solemn words ring in my ear, *without holiness no man can see the Lord*. I will take no risks. *He that putteth his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is not fit for the Kingdom of God*. *If thou wilt be perfect (and that is what I want to be) sell all that thou hast*. I will take all the consequences of holiness: that is the one thing I want. I will not even ask to be understood. Why should I be? *He* was not understood.

WE have learned to live more in the spirit than we used to live; and there are no funerals in our eternal life! The words you wrote me, when I was away (though playfully written), are such a comfort as I apply them now to you and say: "You are somewhere;" and you will be carrying cups of cold water to the thirsty; giving bread to the hungry; and it will be a joy to think of you giving joy.

We cannot so far separate
As not to make the distant near.

We shall eat the same spiritual food day by day; and we shall go to sleep every night in the Everlasting Arms; and the closer we live to God, the nearer we shall be to each other.

SOON you will know the early autumn; even as your Mother knows the late autumn. But there is a springtime that knows no winter and it all lies in the word that came to me this morning: *I am with you alway*; that meets my deepest need. I have had so much, but nothing *stays*: even your children go from you; none abideth but One! He says, *I will never leave you nor forsake you*. He has loved us too much to allow us to be satisfied with anything but Himself. *Room* is all He asks. O! if we could only see the value of empty rooms; and there are times when the heart cries out, *empty, empty*. And there are times when I can bless Him for the empty places. It is the *desert* that is to bloom and blossom as the rose!

THERE are times when I write letters, and put them into the post basket, but I don't seal them. I think that perhaps I may add something, or change my mind in some way. But when I not only close them but *seal* them, the one who has charge of them takes them away, and they go! Now I think it is often so with some of our consecrations. Somehow they are not sealed, and so do not reach their destination. Let us not only say or sing, but act it:

The vow is passed beyond repeal
And now I set the solemn seal.

Then all the rest will follow:

'Tis done; the great transaction's done,
I am my Lord's, and He is mine!

HOW much I have to be thankful for, as I find myself back at what was my home twenty-eight years ago. I remember the first time I came here. I came alone. A friend was at the station to meet me; but I was reading a book, and so passed through, and went to the next station, where I had to wait two hours. I remember saying, "Well! it must be a good thing for me to be *nowhere* for a while." I seemed to be between the old home I had left, and the new place I was to call home. So I spent those two hours in earnest thought and prayer for the future. Many a time since I knew I could not have afforded to lose those two hours, nowhere!

A FRIEND asked me the other day if I did not feel a great loss of vitality. I told her that I should soon fill up again! I feel that what we talk about must be a constant reality to us. I believe what Brooks said: *The world has not heard its best preaching yet*, but to have grander preaching, we must have grander men. I am so hopeful this morning. I find myself singing with Whittier:

I feel the earth more sunward,
 I join the great march onward,
 And take by faith, while living,
 My freehold of thanksgiving!

THERE are no half measures for us; we must overcome or be overcome. I prefer the former. I have had trials in my life (in circumstances and "the nature of things") that would otherwise have swamped me: but I believed in God, and I have determined to turn everything that is against me, to someone else's help. There is no other way. And such a strength comes when we get through expecting anything from human sources; when we get to the end of disappointments; and we don't amount to much, with other people until we do get there! Christ must become our "all in all." I do not mean in a theological fashion, but as a living reality. Christ *in us*, making us happy, when other people would make us miserable!

YOUR bright letter came to me this morning, and I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed it; and I needed it. There are so many shadows in this shadowland! There are family shadows; and unaccountable mental shadows, and I am sure there is only one way out into the sunshine, out into the brightness, and that is in having a God Who is a fact, and a God Who is all-loving, all-patient, and Who loveth all. I think I must be a little way up in that balloon you speak of, for I have come to see so much more than I used to see, and so much appears small to me.

I am satisfied we have hardly touched the fringe of the garment of faith. We are not building in the unseen; we are taken up with what appears; but not with Him Who made them appear. And He not only makes things appear; He makes them disappear! There is a deeper meaning in those old words than we have yet fathomed: *God is our Home*. And until we get Home, we are so tossed about by one thing and another. Life to some is a journeying away from God, further and further away; and at last there comes the word, "I will arise and go unto my Father," and then the poor, ragged, tired child is at home.

I LIKE to be, and must be, exceedingly practical in my faith. Otherwise I shall lose it. It is no little thing to *keep* the faith. St. Paul only tells us he did it; he does not tell us what it cost him. I laughed so the other day, over a conversation I had with a friend, whom I have known for years. I believe she calls herself a mental scientist. I said to her, "I am so glad to see you; are you well?" She looked at me and replied, "Please put the well-thought on me!" I did not know at first what she meant, and then I understood, that she did not wish me to question the matter of her health. Of course she was well! There are many new things floating 'round these days: I try them on in a private sort of way. If they fit me, I wear them; if not I dismiss them. So if I should not be feeling very well, and anyone should ask me, how are you? I could answer *I am well*. And that would be the truth. The real "*me*" is not my body and I shall never fail to let it be known that such is my faith. The *person* is the *spirit*, and that is well! and it is spirit we must think of instead of the cloak we wear. Christ kept saying continually, thy *faith* hath saved thee. *Only believe!* O, if ministers would only exalt faith to the place it has in the New Testament.

ST. PAUL seemed sure of only two things: *save that bonds and imprisonment await me.* And in a sense they are the only two things that most earnest souls can be sure of. I am so glad of your parting word, *be courageous.* You said it more than once, and I ought to be. I have been taking my "soundings." One thing is clear to me, that I must be great *in the sight of the Lord.* And all that is asked of me is to do what I can. If I can only be well, I shall get along. I carry a good deal of freight; but that may keep the boat steady; it did the "Chicago"!

I AM thinking of giving a Christmas talk from the words: *Buy of me*. When Christ said, Buy of me, He was speaking to the people who had need of nothing. They were increased with goods, rich people, and He said to them, buy of me. In all their purchasing, there was one dress they needed and that they would have to obtain from Him. *White raiment that you may be clothed*. The soul must be clothed as well as the body, and the raiment must be white. No clothing, no dress, has any value, compared with this white raiment. How can I get it? What must I pay? He says, Buy of me. One thing I know, and that is, *I was not bought with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Jesus Christ*. I must come and say, "I want the white raiment and I will give my faith in that blood for that white raiment." There was a company St. John saw; and they had white robes, and in answer to the question, Who are these? the answer came, *These are they that have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb*. So it was faith in the Blood of Christ that gave the white raiment. *Believest thou?* Go through the New Testament from beginning to end, the word runs: *Believe, believe*. With this white raiment we are rich this Christmas, whatever else we miss; and we are poor without it, no matter how much of everything else we have. To have a Saviour from sin, to believe in the Name that was given Him (because He

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would save His people from their sins), this is Christmas Peace, Christmas Joy, Christmas Love; this is immortal, eternal; this is to have everlasting life.

I TAKE great delight in the command: *Forgetting the things that are behind*. Should I ever meet Kipling, I shall ask Him to write a hymn on the lines "Lest we remember"! God tells us He forgets and He wishes us to forget as well; If He forgets our sins, He does not wish us to remember them.

I AM alone to-night, but that is not at all uncommon with me. Harry is in Atlantic City; George is also away. I really do not know where Frank is, save that he is in Paradise; and I do not know what he is doing. But I am sure he is busy; he could not be otherwise. Sometimes I am so *hungry*, but I never tell; it is best for me to hold myself to what I am sure is the need of many around. It is a sad world; make the best of it. I have need of all the cultivation of Faith, Hope, and Love that I can keep up; "these three" death cannot touch; and I must get people on this line. I must work, I must be about my Father's business. I cannot say that I do not feel the changes that life has brought to me, but they have not made me bitter, they have not given me (I think they have not) an air of sadness. I am sure I ought to live on the bright side and so I will. I would not, though, give you a wrong impression. I do sometimes think for a little of what it would mean if the sea were not between us; but then I go over to the side on which I must live. What a blessing it is that there is no dark sea of Sin between us. We are one in spirit, and who can estimate what that means? Only those who have it. *So we will return to Him with songs.*

DO you know the lines that are on the stone that marks the spot where the body of your grandmother was laid? These are the words:

Give joy or grief; give ease or pain;
Take life or friends away,
But let me find them all again,
In that eternal day.

We *shall* find them all again. O what a meeting! What should we do in hours of grief or loneliness, if we did not hear the Voice or believe He uttered the words: *I am the Resurrection and the Life! He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and he that liveth and believeth in me, shall never die.* We shall simply be changed into the likeness and image of Christ; we shall be with Him and our dear ones, forever. This is what makes it possible for me to be happy on your birthday with the sea between us. As I believe this, there seems to be no more sea!

I AM so glad I am not commanded to understand anybody, not even myself; only God. *He that glorieth, let him glory in this that he understandeth and knoweth me; that I am the Lord that exerciseth loving kindness and judgment in the earth; for in these things do I delight, saith the Lord.* I was so amused by what an old colored woman gave in a Prayer Meeting, as her "experience." "I have," she said, "the peace of God that passeth all *misunderstandings.*" The only thing needful is that we should not misunderstand God, and I do not see how we can be saved, except by faith. Only by faith can we stand justified. O, how wonderful it will be when we shall "see and know." But till that day dawns, we must believe, because He says, we know, by faith.

I AM glad I am all alone. I am thinking of *them*. "It doth not yet appear," is just as true as "when He shall appear, we shall be like Him." We are walking by Faith now, not by sight, and it is pleasing to God that we should be "still" and know that He is God: the darkness and light are both alike to Him. In His hands are all the deep places of the earth, the deep places in us are in His hands and that is the reason we can be still. I hardly trust myself to think of some things; and so I keep on the old way, to try to make earth as bright as possible. I should have broken, if I had not gone that way; I should have felt old, and then I would have been old. I see people around me making mistakes. It seems to me they do not believe in immortality; or they do not impress me, as if they did. But I will not judge; we all have to go the best way we can, and He is so infinitely tender and pitiful; and is so sorry for us all. But you see He knows what He has in store for us; all the untold joy and rapture of reunions, and He knows that "weeping will only endure for a night, and that joy cometh in the morning," never to be succeeded by a night! So we will keep our Christmas in anticipation of the real Christmas Feast, where all will be at Home!

WE have *said* truth, but not lived it. The "outward perisheth"; but when it comes to seeing it, that is another thing. We have had our estimates wrong, and so we are thrown. O the suffering that must come by clinging to sin and self. We have called death life, and life death. Let us live on the spirit side, and we shall prove under all circumstances that to be spiritually minded is life and peace. To be otherwise minded is death, death now. Hope dies; we are not full of peace. O let us live on the heavenly side of things. You cannot be on both sides at the same time; and you get the results instantly from the side you are on, in thought and contemplation. Put your foot down, your foot of faith; will to live on God's side; take God's thoughts, and live them!

ONE of the sweetest thoughts I can give you now, is one that you gave me when you were a little child. You put the hands of your doll together one Sunday morning at the breakfast table while your sister said "Grace." The doll's fingers were broken; only the stumps of the hands were there. As soon as Grace was over, I turned to you and said, "Your doll is rather the worse for wear." You drew it close up to your bosom and replied, as your lip trembled, "She is dearer to me, since she lost her fingers!" In that moment I saw the love of God. We are nearer, dearer to Him when we are sufferers, when we are broken. As the words are spoken at the Sacrament, "broken for you," only think how His Father felt over that broken Body! And He came to bind up the broken-hearted. And even the bodies that are broken, some day He will make whole!

Thou breakest down to build up,
Not destroy;
Thou doest right, O Lord,
Thou knowest best.

THREE years ago he left us. *He* did not die; the body did. It is not always easy to keep this faith, but it must be kept. Much cannot be kept, and we can afford to let much go; but the faith must be kept, the battle must be fought, the course must be run. We say by our creeds, by our preaching and teaching, that we believe a great deal, but we only believe what we live. And to live what we say we believe, is no little thing. I am facing some things to-day. I say, I believe what Jesus said, *He that believeth in me shall never die*. Do I take in what that means? the glory of it? Well, how do I look? How do I act under the circumstances? Do I look and act so that those who do not believe in Jesus, are compelled to say "She has something I know nothing about. She looks as if he had not died; only gone somewhere!" Do we cultivate a faith like this? The early Church had it. It never said death; it said, *departure; gone to be with Christ; fallen asleep*. This is the only faith that is sufficient for me. Someone said to me the other day: "You have no facts, you have only a faith." Well, I am willing he should have all the facts he wants; only let me have the faith. My faith saves me; nothing material does. "God only is substance."

THIS is your birthday, and I shall not see your face. I cannot even imagine the house in which you live. And if you were not a spirit, if you were not united to me in the Spirit, not much in connection with you would be mine. There is a deeper meaning in *Who is my mother?* than perhaps we see. We must be born again for this purpose, to know that we cannot *see* the Kingdom, unless we are so reborn! If we are not in the same kingdom, we do not meet, we have not the same tastes. For instance, I have no theater life, I imagine I do not belong to the kingdom of art. You do not associate me with it. In some other kingdom we must meet. And what I desire above everything else is that we should meet in the Kingdom of Heaven, here and now. When you write (as you do) that you love Christ, then we meet, for that is what I want above everything else. I do not say there is no human side to all this, but we can be so far from one another in the body (and in all that pertains to the body), that to be "spiritually minded" becomes the one *practical bond*. I am sure our mistake is in not being more spiritual, living more and more in the things that are eternal; more and more at home "in the Lord."

WHAT a privilege it is to live on the Hudson! To be sure it is a very little house I live in, but I am certain I shall find it large enough to glorify God in! and that is my principal business. I should be very stupid indeed if I had not learned by this time (having lived in such a variety of houses, and having spent some time in the larger houses of friends), that it is not in outward conditions that happiness lies. I am glad to-day that I have a child's delight in little things; "sunshine, songs of birds and flowers," and I laughed the other night when the advantages of a small house dawned upon me. Such a house as this is just the house for near-sighted people. Now this whole house is very near me; I can see it all!

HEART TO HEART LETTERS

NO service for God, no head-knowledge of Him, nothing, nothing will suffice but a satisfied heart. I am a seeker for what I write about. Your Father used to say I was always seeking religion. Well! I am glad I did seek. I am glad I am seeking now to know God. I don't care for much else, though I have "all things and abound."

IT is Easter Day, and I have been to church. As I looked at the many plants in full bloom I thought, what a short time since they were seeds or bulbs? And who, if he had not known, would have dreamed that those ugly bulbs could have given us our Easter Lilies? *And it doth not yet appear what we shall be*, and if we had not had a *first fruits*, who could have imagined a glorified body? And one thought that came to me as I looked at the flowers was this: the same power worketh in us that brought forth the flowers and raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, and the same spirit will quicken our mortal bodies. O! the blessed Easter hopes that bloom at the tomb to-day!

THE Love of Christ constraineth me. Love is always constraining; everyone who has loved knows that; but we are in a sad world; changes come, our loved ones pass away. Sometimes changes take place, sadder than death. Sometimes we are separated from those we love, and we miss the inspiration their presence would give us. And yet here is all this work, this life work to be done, and there is so little heart at times to do it with. What shall we do? Is there a better way? Can the One Who made this strange organism, so susceptible to suffering and joy, with such vast capacities for loving, can He satisfy our human hearts? I answer from my deepest consciousness this morning, having suffered on account of what I have been writing about, Yes! There is a perfect Love, and every want of your nature and mine can be met in God.

I FIGHT a battle every day. I know that every day Christ wins or loses in me. And I am determined that what is not of the Father, I will not have. And I know that He that doeth the will of God, abideth forever. No circumstances, no people, nothing can prevent me from doing the will of God; save one person, and that is myself. Not where I am, but what I am is everything to me. *Be ye holy* sounds in my spirit and I must obey the divine call. I have had the best summer of my life, and I am going to have the best winter of my life. If I should die this winter, of course it will be my best winter. If I should live, it will be my best. There are no disappointments on this line.

I HAVE often thought of the little child of a friend of mine. The mother was so anxious that her daughter should be perfect that nearly all her time was spent in pointing out her faults. But one day she was praying aloud, with her child kneeling beside her, and she poured forth her heart in gratitude to God for giving her such a daughter. As she rose from her knees, the child threw her arms around her mother's neck and exclaimed, "O Mother! how you did brag about me to God! Now I *will* be good!" Sometimes, I think a little of the praise we shall shower on our loved ones when they are gone, would help them very much on their way now! O how tired I get of some things! I long for the place where all discord shall be done away. It does seem, as someone has said, that the Church of Christ "sharpens her sickle to cut the harvesters." I have outgrown sects. I do not care what people call themselves. I want to see the image of Christ! I ignore all names, all theology so-called. I believe human hearts want bandaging, and I take my oil and bandages. I am willing that others should do what I cannot do, but I know I am sent to heal the broken-hearted.

ON this Birthday, after having been in the world seventy-eight years, the thing I cannot help seeing is that I seem as far from perfection as ever, and I feel sure I shall not be "finished" when I leave this world! There is nothing for me to rest in, so far as I am concerned. I am glad there is more than one thing that abides. Hope abides—it is not so great as Love, but it abides. And I shall have to hope in the next world, so far as my spiritual education is concerned. So on this, my seventy-eighth birthday, I hope in God.

HEART TO HEART LETTERS

BE your own self as God made you. You cannot go the way of another. I do not say it is better than the way of another, only *I* am not that other: I am only myself; yet that is God's self; the self He made. O, if we can only come to see God, and we shall! The endless years of years are before us; but we must keep on the spirit side. I could age in a month if I dwelt on "time" in my thought. In a sense I have nothing to do with time. I am a child of eternity. Life, Eternal Life is Christ's word. But all this is not to be something apart from the common every-day state of things. If our Christianity is not in everything, it is nothing. It seems as if I had just begun to know what it is to be a Christian.

I HAVE been thinking of the name by which God calls Himself: *I am*. And again, *I am thy God*. Do we really understand what it is to have a God? It is no little thing to believe in God. The biggest thing I know of to-day, is a real belief in God. My one purpose at this time is to get better acquainted with God. Every other acquaintance dwindles into insignificance compared with that. The One Who came to introduce Him as "Our Father," really knew Him. He would never have said "Your Father," if He had not known He was. We have been introduced to God the Father by Christ; now we must believe that "He is." We must say "My God" and not *say* it merely, but believe it, act on it, every day, every hour. And if He says, I am thy Saviour, we must act as if we had a Saviour. We must say, *I am saved*, or we are not witnesses for God, and will not know practically what it is to be saved. When God says *I am* we must echo for ourselves the words, *I am*. We must be linked with omnipotence.

HEART TO HEART LETTERS

THE problems of life are too much for me at times; and there is only one way; just to do as I did with my mother when I was a child. Sewing silk used to be in skeins then, instead of, as now, on spools, and sometimes I did get it so tangled! And when I found myself further and further from unravelling it, I handed it all to my mother. She was patient and calm, and slowly but surely, it all came out right. And there are times when the tangled skein of life is a little too much for me, more tangled inside than out; and there is only one way for me and that is to hand it over to the One Who says, "As a mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." So I need never have any trouble about my mistakes; and if not about mine, why about yours? All things (including mistakes!) are working out! There will not be much to work out, if you leave out mistakes! Let us be true to our Faith! *Kiss the sweet cross, and think on the eternal years.*

I AM well; no friction in the house; and I have gone back to my dear little verse, and am acting upon it,

Resign! and all the load of life
That moment you remove.
Its heavy toil, ten thousand cares,
Devolve on One above!

Why should I carry loads that He wants to carry? He certainly wants to carry away my sins; why should I carry them? He wants to carry my infirmities; why should I carry them? He wants to carry my cares; why should I carry "ten thousand cares"? He carries, and He is strong to do it; I am not. I made up my mind in the middle of last night that I would go into a wholesale business; since a retail business does not agree with me. If I can be *filled* with the Spirit, that sweeps the deck! This "trying to be good" does not agree with me. So I was led to think of the baptism of fire. There is a *fire* symbol in the New Testament as well as a *blood* symbol. Faber says, "God's last grace and best is to die all on fire." So I made up my mind in the night that I would seek the baptism of fire. We hear now and then of the "whirlwinds of grace." Ah! me, we are apt to be content with the faintest breeze.

A REPORTER in Boston the other day said something that made me burst out laughing. She was really startled. She said: "Do you laugh like that?" "Well," I replied, "if you lived with me, you would find it a common thing for me so to laugh." "Ah!" she said, "that accounts for much." I tell you, if we believe a small part of what we say we believe, the smile would hardly leave our faces. Think of being children of light! Think of such a Father! And we say, I believe in God the Father, till it has no meaning to us or anyone else. O, the terrible unreality of it all on the part of those who say it! They make the trouble for those who do not say it. Bad acting! Alas! Alas! Am I a child of God? Am I a child of eternity? Don't ever think of me as your *old* mother. This body will crumble into dust, but your mother is not this body! Your mother is a spirit, and spirit lives. Spirit is always young. Spirit is God! *Seeing all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness. Things and persons* are two very different things. Your *person* is not your body! Now you get an idea of what I have been thinking about, and thoughts make us.

S OMEHOW we do not measure up to St. Paul's experiences. Afflictions were light to him because he saw what we do not seem to see; he saw what the afflictions were working out, and we often lose sight of that. And it was only while he was looking at the things that are not seen, that he saw the brightness of all the earth. Someone said to Emerson, "Mr. Emerson, they say the world is coming to an end." "Well," said Emerson, "I do not need it!" Ah! we have such a slight hold on that immense *I*, our personality. It would be well if we were taken up with two "I's"; God's "I," and our "I." It really seems as if the more you looked at the things that are "not seen," the better some things that are seen get along.

HEART TO HEART LETTERS

HERE we are safe at home. I wonder if you are in a fog? I don't see any other way to be happy and at home in fogs! "Your life is a vapour" (a fog); so make the best of it. A friend of mine told me the other day that she commenced every day simply counting herself out, for, she added, if I don't, there will be no room for the Holy Spirit; for self will take up all the room. Surely we might be happier if we would just take the good of here and now; be thankful for what we have! I laid my flowers yesterday (it was Decoration Day) on all my graves, inside and outside, the flowers of Faith and Hope and Love. Oh, how wonderful they were, and they will not fade!

I HAVE lived long enough to put some things in their places and to keep them there; but they are not the things that are seen. These are so often out of their place, and I forget where I put them. Not so with the things which are *unseen*: I know where they are, and they are eternal. I know that to be spiritually minded is life and peace, and to be carnally minded is death; death now! I found myself this morning repeating one of the old quaint hymns of my girlhood. We used to sing it in class meetings:

Though you have much peace and comfort,
 Greater joys you yet may find,
 Freedom from unholy tempers,
 Freedom from the carnal mind.

MY spiritual Thanksgiving has thrown light for myself on this word: *If it were not so; I would have told you.* It came to me to give thanks for what I did not know. (And there is very little that we really know!) *These all died in faith*, and we may say of such a large number, these all *live* in faith. Thanks for the unknown; thanks for all He has not told us; thanks for the silence when we have said, Why? My Thanksgiving meditation has led me into such green pastures. Of course it only means living by faith; but to me it was a new road that led me into it. So I read the words of Christ this way: *If it were not best for you not to know, I would have told you!* And so what He does not tell, it is best not to know. It has seemed to stop the "Why" for a time! I see you all so plainly as I write. To be sure I wish you could all be with us here at our Feast, but there is better Feast, and at it we do sit down together. *He setteth the solitary in families.* To be solitary is to be lonesome; but as soon as we see the Father, we cease to be solitary; we are all at Home!

HOW many Palm Sunday letters I have written you in my time, but I did not see all I now see in the Palms. They stand for victory. The palm branches and shouts of Hosanna and all the crowd who followed that figure on the ass, passed away; they were short-lived; perhaps there were there the very persons who afterward cried "Crucify Him";—so much for the apparent, the unreal. But that person riding so silently through the crowd, was real, and the real is the true; the real is the eternal. What made Him so victorious? His faith in His Father. He came to do the will, and He was doing it, and He never flinched, till He cried, *it is finished*. And according to the New Testament, we are here to live such lives as He lived. Christ is to be known through the spirit within us; we are to manifest His life, a life lived in the unseen. There was where He lived; that made Him so independent of the outward. He came to establish within us a Kingdom in the unseen, and He has put us here to carry on this work of establishing the Kingdom of God in the hearts of people.

HEART TO HEART LETTERS

IT is true now as ever. Everyone sooner or later exclaims in heart, *every vision faileth*. And it is really so, one broken dream after another. Only think of the vision of a perfect friendship, a perfect love, and if the vision is granted you (as in some cases it is), God takes your vision from before your eyes. But alas! in the majority of cases, the vision is never embodied. Yet they had the vision; and every vision faileth! And it is clear to me that what God wants us to see is that *He Himself* is the "effect" of every vision, the beautiful vision! O, I am sure we have, if we seek it, the effect of every vision. Life is strewn with faded flowers, and yet the Flower of Eternity is fadeless. Perhaps if other flowers had not faded, we would never have sought the imperishable.

I THANK God this morning for *desire*. I am coming to look at Christ in a very practical way. I think we have had theological views of Him, and sentimental views, but now we must have a *practical* understanding of him; and the fact is we are to desire these qualities that He possessed. I say to myself, is He really mine, if I do not possess His character, in my measure, or some measure, at least? And may we not find out some day that the people who perhaps haven't said *Lord! Lord!* as we say it, have, even so, had His spirit, and so were truly Christ's though they might not have understood it; and that many who said *Lord, Lord*, He never knew! And we never are known to any but those who are in some degree at least like us. It seems to me if half the teaching had been the other way, and we had striven to get people to be loving and thoughtful of others, and gentle and unselfish, *giving* (rather than the eternal thought of *getting*), it would not have been so difficult to get them to know Christ.

HEART TO HEART LETTERS

ONE fact stands out clearly, and that is there is nothing that can take the place of "holiness" in God's sight. We have lived too much in the sight of people, and in our own sight; it is high time to begin to live in God's sight. To bring every thought, every action into this light, and to hold ourselves there, and find out what God thinks of it. I woke this morning with these two lines of Wesley running in my mind,

Deeply on my thoughtful mind
Eternal things impress!

Let us ask ourselves, whether we really think that God is getting all that belongs to Him out of us; whether this little piece of property He owns, is being improved for the Owner?

YOU have come to another turning point in your life. You need now in regard to many things to let the past suffice. What those things are, I think your eyes will be opened to see. *Sleep on beloved, and take your rest.* Some things, some opportunities are gone forever. Rise, let us be going, there is something yet to do. How well I remember those words of Bushnell: "Study your trials, your talents, the world's wants, and stand ready to serve God now, in whatever He brings to your hands." Nothing could pay you better at this time of your life than to *study your trials*. I see before you one path that will bring blessing and that is *narrow*; the path of entire consecration to God. Every life except the highest life will end in bitter disappointment. An ambassador has one business; and everyone will respect you if you attend to this business, which is always on hand—to represent Christ! *Think on these things.*

I HAVE just been reading an address of William Arthur, the author of the "Tongue of Fire." He said, in part: "Now I know that there are many people who always cry out for something practical, something *to do*, and they always seem to mean something that the hands can handle or the feet can touch. Very well, all that is practical. But permit me to say, that so far as I know, the most practical thing in this world is a thought put into a human mind, or a feeling raised in a human heart, and whatever tends to keep thought right, and feeling right; or whatever tends, when thought has gone wrong, to raise it up to the right, is for me the most practical thing man can do. Get right feeling, and right thinking, and they will bring all the other things after them."

WE want magnificent Christians; men intensely devoted to "one thing"; and everything else helping on that one thing. Now no "business man," as one terms such, will ever have the real respect for clergymen till they see them as anxious about the spiritual culture of everyone within their reach, as they themselves are anxious to make money or gain whatever they have before them. Only in clergymen (as their business is so much higher and grander) they expect to see an even deeper earnestness. And here comes the trouble and people are becoming skeptical. This age must have things *real*; no shams, no *appearances*, and what you have not, you cannot *show*. Be in earnest about having a living inward experience. Have the spirit Grant had when he said, "I'll fight it out on this line, if it takes me all summer." I *will* know God. And the moment the *will* is fixed, you are on the way. All heaven will be on your side. But you will have to put your fingers in your ears and cry "Eternal life!" "Eternal life!"

WE are like God in this: nothing satisfied Him but love; and so when He says, *thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*, He simply tells us what we need and what He needs. God says, *what more could I have done for my vineyard that I have not done in it? and I looked that it should bring forth grapes and it brought forth wild grapes*. Perfect grapes are a refreshment, they are so sweet. Wild grapes are bitter, sour, and hard. The sweetest thing in this universe is love, and that is what God wants; and unless we love Him, and feel that He loves us, we are not, and cannot be, happy. This is the experience without which, no matter how much we may preach, or work for others, there remains a lack within.

I PROPOSE to sit down with my soul, and solemnly ask myself the most important question that, with my views, I can ask myself: *what think ye of Christ?* I cannot tell you what peace and joy are in my heart, as I answer the question and confess my faith in Him as my Saviour. I need a Saviour!

The mistakes of my life have been many,
 The sins of my heart have been more.
 And to me Christ is the Saviour from the guilt of sin. I know this is not a fashionable theory, and I have been on more than one excursion myself, but I come back with such gladness to the old, old hymn,

Forever here my rest shall be,
 Close to Thy bleeding side;
 This all my hope, and all my plea,
 For me the Saviour died.

All this is very old-fashioned, but it is not cant. If you preach the Gospel, the glad tidings of great joy to all people, you will have to preach a characterless salvation. *They that be whole, need not a physician, but they that are sick;* and so few admit that they are sick! It is our pride that is the hateful thing in God's sight!

AT the age of twenty-five the idea of entire consecration to Christ became *the* idea with me; to live, work, think, speak, write, in short to do all "heartily, as unto the Lord"; this took possession of me, and this was the beginning of real life with me. I know it was a life very, very imperfect. I can look back now and see what great mistakes I have made; but I believe that the motive was good; I worked for Christ; and through a way so strange, the unseen world became the real world to me. Through suffering (that few know of, or dream of) I have come, or "am coming, Lord, to Thee." But one thing is clear to me: all that makes me rich today (and I have my riches), all that makes the future loom up so grandly, *everything*, I can trace to that determination that I would be all the Lord's. No one knows my imperfections of character more than I do; and I think there is much in me still untamed, but only those can judge me who have such a nature as I have. But this I know, that God will *save* a soul by His providence and grace, which is honest at heart, and wants to be pure, and useful, and to work for Him.

I HAVE not been useful in a domestic way, I am convinced of that. I have not been what I wished to be as a mother. And yet I have every reason to believe that I have helped many women, *not all*, but many, to a trust and love and hope in God, and in this I will rejoice, yea! and do rejoice! I have had an idea running right through my life, and it has run through a most imperfect character. But the stream has been there, the idea I have never lost sight of, that of entire consecration to God. And that "service" never seemed so "reasonable" (rational, the word means) as it does now. All besides, I am satisfied is insanity; this only is rational. All the good that has come to me, has come along the lines of my consecration. *This one thing I do* is a good motto. Failure along any line awaits those who have not the three requisites for success: *conviction, concentration, consecration.*

MY object today is to create a fear of what the New Testament calls the *world*. I may not be able to define it, it isn't easy to do so, but we must be saved from the power of it. Those who feel no danger, I am convinced are in the most dangerous position. The Pharisees were slaves to it; the "sinners" did not seem to know much about it. They had the flesh maybe to contend with, but it is the *world* that is put at the head of the forces that are against us. I find that "the world" really means separation from God, and God only is the cure for worldliness. And there can be separation from God even when we are doing, or think we are doing God service!

I KNOW there is a real sore place in your heart, and I want you to bring it to the great Healer. Do not say, "I will show some people in the future what I can do", and thus let the sore rankle, but first go to Christ, and tell *Him* all your disappointments, and the disappointments of others, and then go forth *alone with Him* and make the defeats of the past "stepping stones to higher things", to future success. "Organize victory out of defeat." Only be determined in the strength of God, by acknowledging Him in all your ways, that victory shall perch on your future banner, and all will be well.

IF I knew of any other place "where everlasting spring abides" but in Christ, I would tell you. If I could say to you, out of my own experience (and it has been uncommonly rich in this respect), that human love will never disappoint you, and that you will find the friendships of earth all that you picture them; ah! if I could only tell you this! How gladly would I say it if I could. But I can tell you one thing; for I have been off on an exploring expedition to find something of far greater importance than any Northwest Passage. O, how I have longed to know whether there was another "open sea"; whether there was any connection between broken dreams, disappointed hopes of earth, and something higher in me; if I could reach a shore where my ships would come home; if much that must die would give place to something more beautiful; or whether the brightness could only be in remembrance of what had been, or might have been! God only, and the soul, who goes on this exploring expedition, can know how much must be passed through; and yet the real death would be to give up the search! And then slowly you begin to find out that the soul never loses anything worth having, by progress. Only keep pressing on towards the things which are before; forgetting what is behind; so you really save all that is of any value. O! what a life (and the only real life) our inner life may be!

WHEN we once let into our thoughts and heart the truth we sing so often, *Thou O Christ art all I want*, Christ's presence will be to us more than anything else in the universe. So whatever it is we want, let us, instead of asking for that, ask for Christ, and in His coming we shall have what is better than anything else. If we ask for something which it is His will that we should have, we shall have it *with Christ*. *He will give us all things*, but the deepest want is Christ. And if He withholds anything we have asked for, and yet gives Himself, we shall be more than satisfied.

SPIRIT is more to me than anything material. O! how I have longed for spiritual communion; it has been my life and nothing, nothing can take its place with me. George in writing to me, while sailing up the Hudson this week, said he often wondered why the Apostle Paul made so little of the beauties of nature; he never seemed to notice them. Ah! he had a sight of Christ that swallowed up all His works. And in having Christ, we have what all nature cannot give us, and there will come a time, and it is hastening on, when only Christ can be anything to us.

I AM taking my New Testament very simply these days. His sayings are written and I am to do them, that is, I am to be obedient. I take the Sermon on the Mount and say, this is to be done! I am to love my enemies, for instance, and I soon find I cannot do it. I cannot live free from anxious care, I cannot love disagreeable people, I cannot be pure in heart, I cannot rejoice when persecuted, and all the rest; I find it impossible. And yet only those who do as He said, are on the rock! Then I go on in my New Testament and I find there is a power promised that will enable me to fulfill His commands. I find such strange words as "a new creature in Christ Jesus", and other mysterious sayings like *I in Him*, and *He in Me*. And I find that someone, yes more than one *did* do as He said. And then it comes to me that their Power may be mine too. And so my House stands, because it is built upon a rock!

RUTHERFORD said, "Anworth (his parish) was not Heaven and preaching was not Christ." What is needed is to know our risen Lord; and the gift of Pentecost, which His rising from the dead secured us, can alone make us know the risen Christ, and the Christ within us. We know an historical Christ, and a sentimental Christ, but the Christ Who is the power of God to everyone that believeth, only the Baptism of the Spirit can enable us to know. I see so much in the words *that ye may know Him and the power of His Resurrection*. We cannot know nor endure the fellowship of His sufferings till we know the power of His Resurrection, by the Holy Ghost. In spite of the Church saying constantly *I believe in the Holy Ghost*, there is danger today of the Church rejecting the Holy Ghost, the indwelling Christ, as God's ancient people rejected Christ as the Messiah. What we need today is to listen to those last words: *Hear what the spirit saith unto the churches*.

IT is a wonderful thing to be "alive unto God", and I believe it is the only way to be kept alive to every good thing that is worth anything. I meet so many lifeless people, and I believe it is the absence of God in them. We can so live in God that we are in touch with the past, the present and the future. I was thinking yesterday that the most interesting things are those that I have yet to see. The most of my life is before me, because life is not extension, it is satisfaction. Only think, we have never seen His Face yet, have never seen our dear ones in their new bodies, and we are to see the coming of Christ, we are to see Him take to Himself His Great Power, and reign from the rivers to the ends of the Earth. All this is before us and it is time to gird our bridal robes around us. Arise! Arise! Morning dawns!

HEART TO HEART LETTERS

JUST at my right hand hangs a motto that someone gave me; the letters, on a dark green background, all in silver: *I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh.* I am glad I believe it, and that there is no flesh left out. *All flesh*, that means *my* flesh. I used to sing

Thou hast my flesh, thy hallowed shrine
Devoted solely to Thy will.
Here let Thy light forever shine,
This house let all Thy presence fill.
Thou source of life, live, dwell and move
In me, till all my life be love."

How glad I am I know the old Methodist hymns!

I HAVE no controversy with anybody in regard to doctrines, or forms, or dogmas. What I want is life, and I know Christ is the Life; and He is to be in us. I am glad I am on my way to the one Church, "the general assembly and church of the first born whose names are written in Heaven." I think the doctrines of my own church as pure as those of any other. Yet one of our ministers said last Sunday, that the different denominations of Christians were like separate pools, showing the tide has gone out. When the tide comes in, all will be one! One church! O! how that ideal has flashed before me. Well, as Jean Ingelow says, all there is to know, that we shall know some day!

HEART TO HEART LETTERS

I HAVE been much impressed with this word: *Father the hour is come, when the Son of Man is to be glorified.* He did not say *crucified*, though the hour had come for His awful suffering; He saw only the glory that was to follow. And so it seems to me, we may say in all our hours of suffering, the hour is come in which I am to be glorified. Perhaps if you could see all the glory that is coming through your suffering of a present trial, nothing but the word "glorified" would be appropriate.

IF we are to go so soon (and we may go sooner than we think), to the Eternal World, then it is the only wise thing to find out what we can take with us, and cultivate what will "pass" there. And we have it in these words: *have faith in God; hope thou in God; God is love.* If you have Him, you have love. All of our life, all our disciplines, all our disappointments, everything that goes to make up our life, all are for the perfecting of faith, hope, and love. And we want to get every help within our reach, to aid us on these lines. We want to know the people who can help us to faith, hope, and love; we want to read the books; we want to do the deeds; we want to use the stock we have, that we may increase our supply. One of the hymns my mother used to sing, ran:

Help us to help each other Lord,
 Our little stock to improve,
 Increase our faith, confirm our hope,
 And perfect us in love.

And when the mighty work is done,
 Receive thy ready bride,
 Give us in heaven a happy lot,
 With all the sanctified.

WHAT is the use of *saying, Thy will be done*, if we do not do it! I am not so afraid of agnosticism or any other "ism," as I am of being regarded as a Christian and not *being* a Christian. To *mean* it when we say, "I believe in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ His Son"; that is to rejoice evermore. We are certainly not called to rejoice in ourselves, or in circumstances, but in God. I like to look at that picture of total financial failure in Habakuk III., 17, and then hear him say: although all is gone, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will joy in the God of my salvation, and again to listen to St. Paul saying just before his execution, *Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, Rejoice!* O! it is royal! I see so often Christian women loaded with *crepe*, you would think they had never heard of Heaven, or did not believe that Christ had risen. O! the joyless faces, that give no hint of glad tidings of great joy to all people: that is what makes infidelity; that is what makes agnosticism.

WE had been talking about Christians, and by some law of association, as I took up a book, the same feeling came to me that I had as a child when I received my Christmas presents. It passed from me instantly, leaving with me the consciousness that youth had gone; that some emotions would never come to me again. I can give you no idea of the pain that accompanied that consciousness; I have always been so youthful. And I sat still and thought, can it be possible? Must I grow old? And finally I knelt and prayed. My deepest prayers have fewest words, but God saw it all and softly came this answer,

Even to old age, I am He!

And I was saved. The thought that He did not, would not grow old, that I was His, seemed to renew my youth.

MUCH of life is in waiting; so we wait. A certain brotherhood in India have a remarkable motto which is called their "secret." *Will and wait!* And all you will and wait for, will come. I read of a curious incident where one of the "brothers" found a most unlikely thing which he had willed and waited for. And then I thought of the wonderful "secrets" the Elder Brother has given us. Alas! that we should use them so little. *All things are possible with God; and all things are possible to him that believeth, and He that believeth shall not make haste.*

CHRIST is our Life. Not Church, nor Creed, but Christ, and He is a *Life*, and life means growth. And growth means that word so much used these days, environment, correspondence. I see no difficulty in our coming to see facts. We can easily find out, if we are honest, where life is, and a biologist would tell us what class we belong to. And the Bible, I am coming to think, is only scientific, when it says: *that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit, is spirit*. A diamond may be the most beautiful of precious stones; but it can never be a *plant*; it can never grow. And we find that the only real life is eternal life, and that means not simply *living on* but *knowing* someone, and that Someone, God!

I AM glad the injunction is to *save yourselves and those who hear you*. For I doubt if we save others very much, if we are not straight before ourselves. And I find, as I have ever found, that it *costs* to be saved ourselves. It is no little thing to be true to one's convictions. The old hymns come back with their full force; deeper than ever their meaning to me.

This world is not a friend to grace
To help us on to God!

And we want to be soldiers! and face the music! Nothing could be put more strongly than St. Paul puts the contrast between *this* world and *that* world (and both are here!) between *this* Kingdom and *that* Kingdom; Christ's Kingdom and Satan's Kingdom. And as in our war, those on the border had the worst time of it; for they were neither on one side, nor on the other; you never knew whether they were Northern or Southern!

THERE is such a meaning this morning in all the passages of Scripture that have the word "spirit" in them. What I should do now without a spiritual religion, I do not know. All the resources I used to depend on, seem to be cut off from me. Now where is my supply to come from? I need companionship, inspiration, and must have it. If I haven't it, I can do nothing. If you say "Church," I haven't a church, or even a chapel in point of numbers. Well, have I inspiration? Yes! Am I lonely? No! God is a spirit!

Where'er I seek Him, He is found,
And every place is holy ground.

And O! what a wonderful Cathedral I worship in, and the Bishop of Souls is *the* Bishop, and an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect are there. And you know the Apostle does not say we *may* come, but *are* come to Mount Zion. O, the Church of God! the Holy Church, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints. How they begin to come about me in spirit these days!

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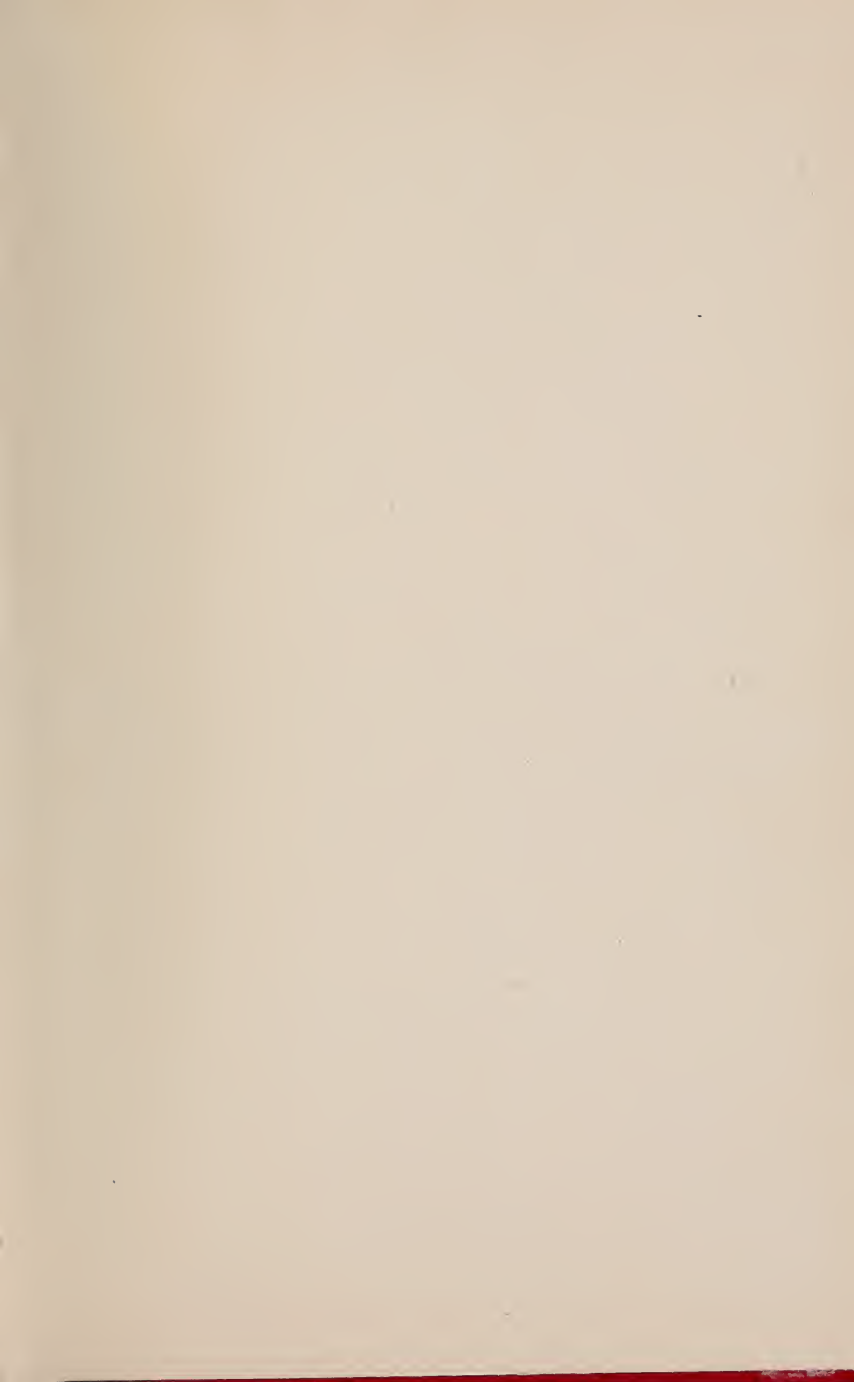
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